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ABSTRACT

This annual report summarizes some major trends in the Wake County Public School System (WCPSS), North Carolina, and provides a set of benchmarks against which the progress of WCPSS can be measured in the future. In some cases data are presented to show longitudinal trends, and in others, comparisons are made with other school districts (local education agencies, or LEAs). The report shows that per pupil expenditures in WCPSS remain among the lowest of comparison LEAs, and student dropout rates remain the lowest among North Carolina comparison LEAs. Student population growth in WCPSS exceeded that of North Carolina comparison LEAs for every year except one in the 1990s and 2000, but the ratio of administrator, supervisor, and consultant positions remained the lowest among comparison LEAs in 7 of the 9 years. North Carolina End-of-Grade and End-of-Course tests scores were higher than those for North Carolina comparison LEAs except for Economical, Legal, and Political Systems and writing at grades 7 and 10. Overall, WCPSS continued to post the strongest academic performance among all North Carolina LEAs, and scores were mid-range when compared to Educational benchmarking Network districts in the southeastern United States. (Contains 34 figures.) (SLD)

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ED 458 227

July 2001

E&R Report No. 01.09

STATE OF THE SYSTEM

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WAKE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

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State of the System

July 2001

WAKE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

OVERVIEW

The purpose of this annual report is to summarize some major trends in the Wake County Public School System (WCPSS) and provide a set of benchmarks against which the progress of WCPSS in future years can be measured. The report is designed to provide educators and the general public with information that is accurate, up-to-date, and easy to interpret. In some places, the information is presented in longitudinal form because the important factor is change over time in WCPSS. In other places, the report focuses on comparisons with other school districts, known as local education agencies (LEAs). Section I contains comparisons with similar LEAs in North Carolina, while Section II contains comparisons with similar LEAs in other southeastern states who participate in an Educational Benchmarking Network (EBN). Some of the major findings are listed below.

I. Within North Carolina:

- **Per pupil expenditures in WCPSS remain among the lowest of NC comparison LEAs.**
- **Student dropout rates in WCPSS remain the lowest among NC comparison LEAs.**
- **Student population growth in WCPSS exceeded that of NC comparison LEAs for every year except one in the 1990s and 2000, while the ratio of administrator, supervisor, and consultant positions remained the lowest among comparison LEAs in seven of nine years.**
- **EOG and EOC scores are higher than NC comparison LEAs, except for ELP and writing at grades 7 and 10.**

II. Within the Southeast:

- **Per pupil expenditures in WCPSS were among the lowest of comparison EBN districts in 1997-98, but are now mid-range. Student dropout rates in WCPSS were the lowest among comparison EBN districts.**
- **Student population growth in WCPSS in 2000 was higher than in all other comparison EBN districts.**

Overall, WCPSS continued to post the strongest academic performance among all NC comparison LEAs, and steady gains were made throughout the 1990s and 2000. Compared to EBN districts in other states, WCPSS SAT scores were mid-range with a higher percentage of students taking the test. Only one other EBN district tested as high a percentage of students and achieved a higher average SAT score from 1997-2000.

SECTION I: COMPARISONS WITH COMPARABLE NORTH CAROLINA SYSTEMS

Section I of this report presents a selection of school system characteristics and performance indicators collected during the 1990s and 2000 for the Wake County Public School System (WCPSS) and comparable local education agencies (LEAs) in North Carolina. The LEAs that are compared to WCPSS include:

- **Durham**
- **Winston-Salem/Forsyth**
- **Guilford**
- **Charlotte-Mecklenburg**

The comparison LEAs are large school districts that have been described as similar in nature to WCPSS. Based on the 1990 and 2000 Census data there is similarity among these districts on variables such as:

- the percentage of working parents of 6-17 year-olds;
- the percentage of 6-17 year-olds below the poverty level;
- the educational attainment of residents in the LEA; and
- the average household income.

The data in this report are presented in figures to reveal:

- longitudinal trends in WCPSS from the 1990-91 through the 1999-2000 school year; and
- comparisons of WCPSS with other LEAs over this same period.

Instructions for interpreting many of the figures in this report are provided in the example below.

INTERPRETING FIGURES IN THIS REPORT

An Example

This figure, depicting real data for the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), is similar to many of the figures that appear in this report. Within the figure, the blue dots (○) and numbers above them indicate the values for WCPSS, while the **striped bars** (=) indicate the values for the other LEAs being compared to WCPSS, ranging from the LEA with the *lowest* value to the LEA with the *highest* value in each year being reported.

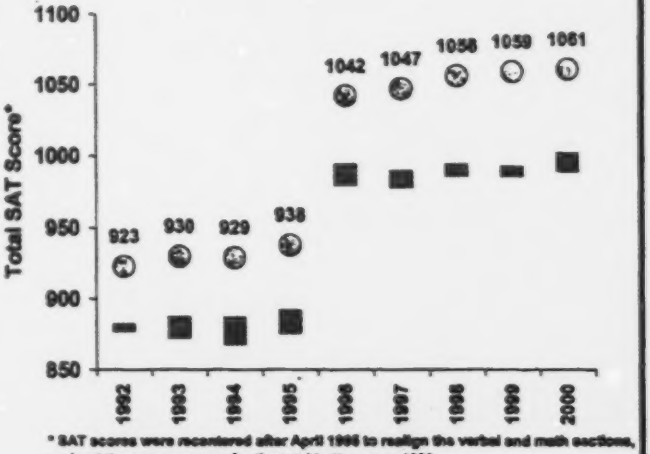
The comparison LEAs differ for some of the years because schools in Durham and Guilford counties did not merge into countywide systems until the 1992-93 and 1993-94 years, respectively.

Comparisons LEAs within North Carolina are as follow:

- 1991-92: Forsyth and Mecklenburg;
- 1992-93: Durham, Forsyth and Mecklenburg;
- 1993-94 through 1999-2000: Durham, Forsyth, Guilford and Mecklenburg;

All sources of data are referenced at the end of each section.

Figure 1
Scholastic Aptitude Test:
WCPSS and Comparable NC LEAs



* SAT scores were recentered after April 1995 to realign the verbal and math sections, and put the average score for the total battery near 1000.

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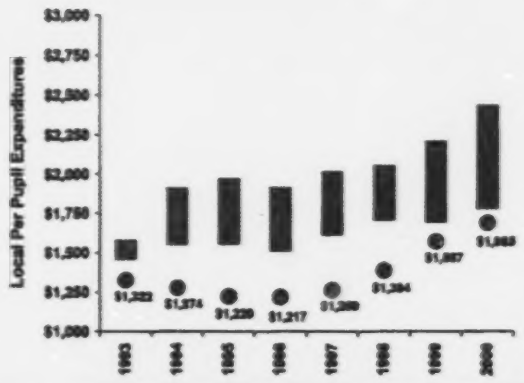
LOCAL PER PUPIL EXPENDITURES

Local per pupil expenditures in WCPSS remained below those of all comparable NC LEAs throughout the 1990s and in 2000.

Local per pupil expenditures were below those of the comparison LEAs again in NC in 2000. In the mid-1990s, WCPSS per student expenditures began to decline, putting them even further below those of the comparison LEAs. Although the WCPSS per student expenditure has increased each year since, it has remained well below those of the comparison NC LEAs.

Figure 2
Local Per Pupil Expenditures Excluding Child Nutrition: WCPSS and Comparable NC LEAs

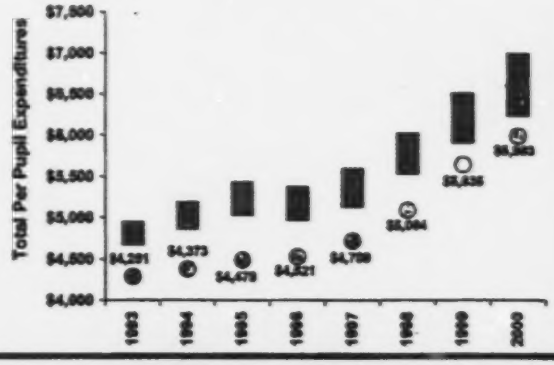


TOTAL PER PUPIL EXPENDITURES

The total of federal, state, and local per pupil expenditures in WCPSS remained below all other comparison NC LEAs.

When all sources of revenue are combined, the total of federal, state, and local per student expenditures was also well below that of comparison LEAs in NC throughout the 1990s and again in 2000*. Even with recent increases, WCPSS total expenditures remained below that of comparison LEAs.

Figure 3
Total Federal, State, and Local Per Pupil Expenditures Excluding Child Nutrition: WCPSS and Comparable NC LEAs

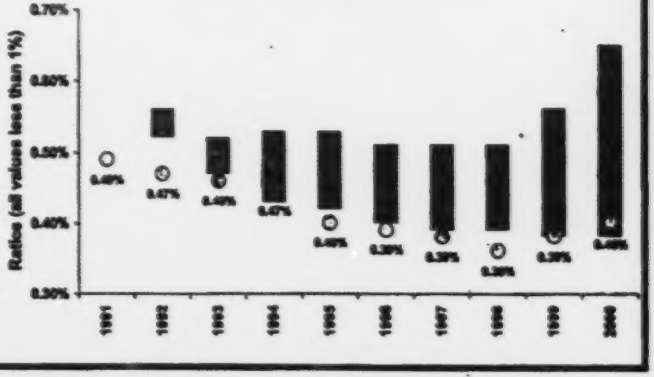


ADMINISTRATOR, SUPERVISOR, AND CONSULTANT POSITIONS

The ratio of administrator, supervisor, and consultant positions to student enrollment in WCPSS was the lowest among comparison LEAs within NC in seven of the nine most recent years.

While the student population in WCPSS has increased 41% since 1991-92 and 35 new schools have opened, the ratio of administrator, supervisor, and consultant positions to first-month student enrollment remained down 18%, despite an increase in 2000.

Figure 4
Ratio of Administrator/Supervisor/Consultant Positions to First-Month Enrollment: WCPSS and Comparable NC LEAs

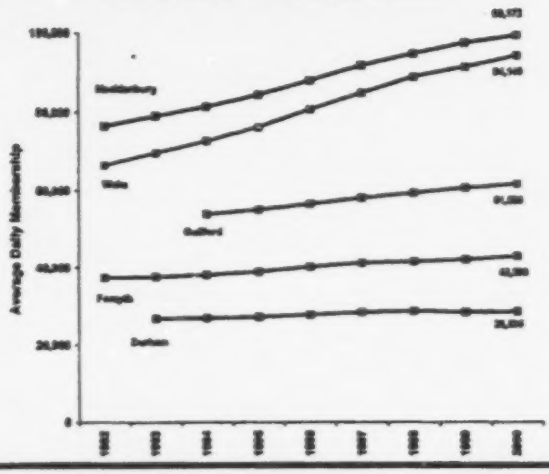


POPULATION GROWTH

Student population growth in WCPSS exceeded all comparison LEAs in NC every year except one between 1992 and 2000.

WCPSS is the second largest school district in the state. It grew steadily in the last decade, and the growth in average daily membership (ADM) over this period exceeded that of any comparison LEA in NC. For every year except one, WCPSS added more students to its population than did Mecklenburg County, the largest school district in the state. Between 1992 and 2000, WCPSS experienced a 41% growth in first-month ADM.

Figure 5
First-Month ADM: WCPSS and Comparable NC LEAs

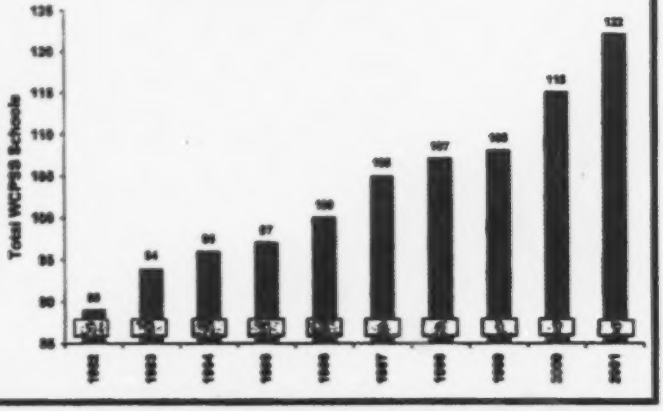


WCPSS SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION

Thirty-five new schools opened in WCPSS between 1991 and 2000.

In WCPSS, 84 regular schools and 3 alternative schools were operating in the 1990-91 year. In the years since then, WCPSS has opened 35 new schools, not counting replacement schools. Seven new schools opened at the beginning of the 2000-2001 year, bringing the total to 122 schools: 78 elementary schools, 24 middle schools, 16 high schools, and 4 alternative schools. More schools are being planned for the years ahead.

Figure 6
Number of WCPSS Schools



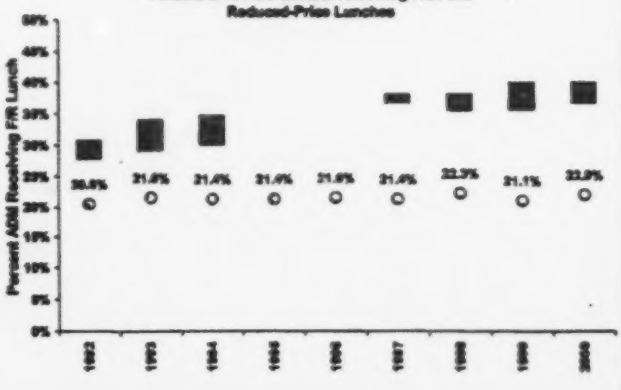
FREE AND REDUCED-PRICE LUNCHES

The percentage of WCPSS students receiving free and reduced-price lunches was at the lowest range of values among comparison LEAs in NC throughout the 1990s and again in 2000.

Between 1991-92 and 1999-2000*, WCPSS experienced little change in percentage of students receiving free and reduced-price lunches. In contrast, comparison LEAs in NC did experience increases.

*Percentages were not reported by NCDPI in 1995 and 1996. The 2000 data for all LEAs include breakfasts for pre-kindergarten students.

Figure 7
Percent of 7th-Month ADM Receiving Free and Reduced-Price Lunches



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RACIAL COMPOSITION

All racial groups in WCPSS increased their numbers during the last decade, with the Hispanic student group increasing at the fastest rate.

Between 1991 and 2000, the Hispanic student population increased by 597%; Asian-American students by 137%; Native-American students by 113%; African-American students by 50%, and Caucasian students by 38%. The dramatic increases in the Hispanic and Asian-American student groups affect instructional programs such as English as a Second Language.

Figure 8
Enrollment of WCPSS Students by Race and Year
(In Two-Year Increments)

Year / Race	1992	1994	1996	1998	2000
Caucasian	46,358	50,492	55,702	59,846	61,442
African-American	18,142	19,774	21,489	24,098	26,132
Asian-American	1,650	1,860	2,320	2,986	3,596
Hispanic	621	931	1,563	2,394	3,603
Native-American	143	135	198	219	245

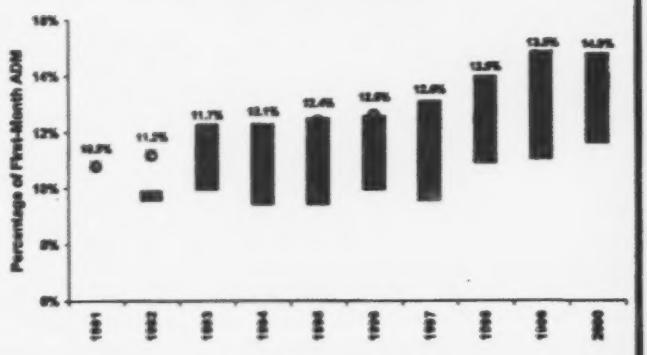
STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The percentage of WCPSS students with disabilities was at the upper range of values among comparison LEAs in NC until 1997, but was closer to mid-range from 1998 to 2000.

In WCPSS, there were 7,448 students with disabilities in the 1991-92 school year, and 13,138 such students in the 1999-2000 year.

*Unduplicated count of children ages 3-21 as of December 1, 1999. Students with disabilities have Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and are eligible for federal funds (Title VI-B).

Figure 9
Students with Disabilities as a Percentage of First-Month ADM: WCPSS and Comparable NC LEAs



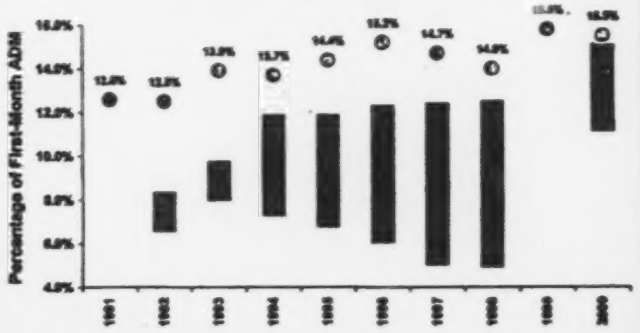
ACADEMICALLY GIFTED STUDENTS

The percentage of WCPSS students classified as academically gifted exceeded the highest values among comparison LEAs in NC for a decade.

In WCPSS, there were 8,064 academically gifted (AG) students in the 1990-91 year, and 14,837 such students in the 1999-2000* year.

*The inclusion of AG as a category of Exceptional Children Programs was discontinued in 1999 and, therefore, not reported by NCDPI for 1999. In June 2001, DPI reported the 2000 data in an online Special Programs publication. WCPSS AG Dept. reported the 1999 data.

Figure 10
AG Students as a Percentage of First-Month ADM: WCPSS and Comparable NC LEAs



NC ABCs PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOL GRADES 3-8

FOURTH- AND SEVENTH-GRADE NC WRITING TEST SCORES

Fourth- and seventh-grade writing test scores in WCPSS have been inconsistent over time—sometimes higher than in comparable NC LEAs and sometimes lower — but these scores increased substantially in 2001.

In North Carolina, the 4th- and 7th-grade writing tests are elements in the state's ABC Accountability Model for elementary and middle schools, along with the end-of-grade reading and mathematics exams. The writing test was first conducted in 4th grade during the 1992-93 year, and in 7th grade during the 1995-96 year. On a scale of 1 to 4, writing test scores of 2.5 or better are considered to be at or above grade-level performance.

Initially scores on the writing tests were inconsistent over time in both the state and WCPSS, suggesting some difficulty with establishing valid and reliable scoring rubrics. However, state scores have become more stable. In WCPSS, fourth-grade writing test scores improved in the first three years of test administration, fell two years, improved one year, fell slightly in 1999, and increased substantially in 2000 and 2001. (Additionally, scores in 2000 were higher than in comparison LEAs.) Seventh-grade WCPSS writing test scores fell in 1996-97, improved substantially in the next two years, decreased slightly in 2000, and increased in 2001.

Writing assessments are under review by the State Board of Education (SBE) and DPI. The SBE has suspended the writing test results from the ABCs growth calculation for the 2000-2001 school year.

Figure 11
Fourth-Grade Writing Test Scores of 2.5 or Better:
WCPSS and Comparable NC LEAs

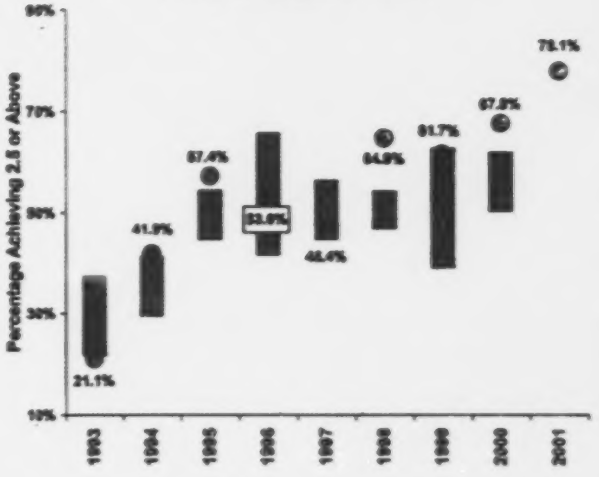
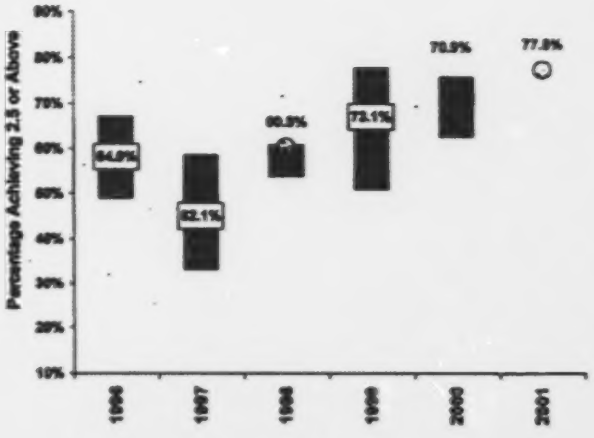


Figure 12
Seventh-Grade Writing Test Scores of 2.5 or Better:
WCPSS and Comparable NC LEAs



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NC END-OF-GRADE READING TEST SCORES

WCPSS scores on the 1999-2000 end-of-grade reading tests exceeded those of all comparison LEAs at all grade levels, 3-8. In 2001, WCPSS developmental scale scores have reached new highs at every grade level, and 81-91% of students at all grade levels demonstrated mastery of subject matter.

The NC end-of-grade (EOG) tests for reading are scaled developmentally so that scores should rise with each passing year. This developmental pattern is evident in *Figure 13*, which shows that WCPSS performed better than any of the comparison LEAs at all grade levels in the 1999-2000 school year. (Comparison scores for 2001 were not available in July 2001.)

Average EOG reading developmental scale scores have been steadily climbing in WCPSS over time, and scores at all grade levels reached new highs in 2001, as shown in the following table.

	2000	2001
Grade 3	149.7	150.2
Grade 4	152.9	154.1
Grade 5	158.5	159.0
Grade 6	158.9	159.8
Grade 7	162.5	162.7
Grade 8	165.1	165.8

The EOG reading and mathematics tests are also scored for four achievement levels: I, II, III and IV, with levels III and IV indicating subject mastery at or above grade level. *Figure 14* shows that in the last four years, more than three-fourths of all students in grades 3-8 performed at or above grade level on the EOG reading test. In 2001, the percentage reached over 80% for all grades, with grades five and eight exceeding 90%.

Figure 13
1999-2000 Average EOG Reading Developmental Scale Scores: WCPSS and Comparable NC LEAs

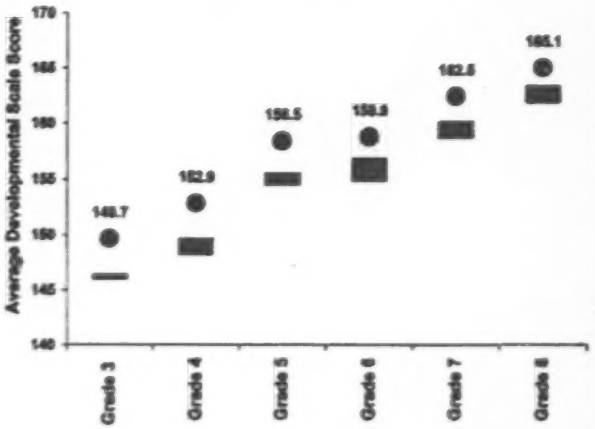
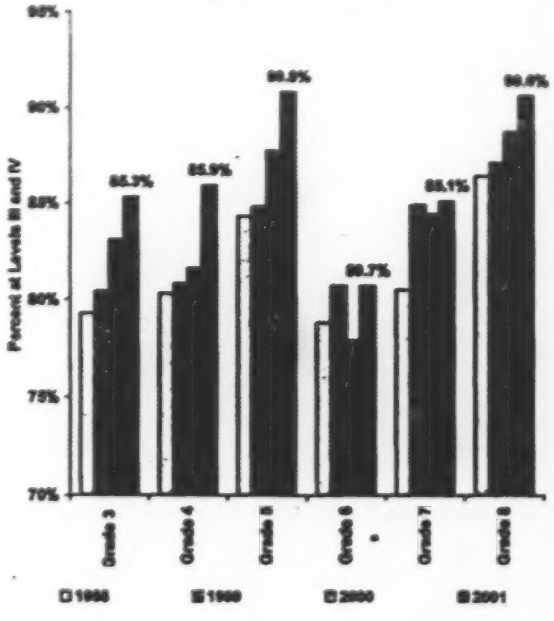


Figure 14
Percent of WCPSS Students at Levels III and IV: EOG Reading 1998 through 2001



NC END-OF-GRADE MATHEMATICS TEST SCORES

WCPSS scores on the 1999-2000 end-of-grade math tests exceeded those of the comparison NC LEAs at every grade level, 3-8. Within WCPSS, developmental scale scores have been climbing over time at each grade level, and 80-89% of students at all grade levels demonstrated mastery of subject matter.

The EOG examinations for mathematics are scaled developmentally so that scores are expected to rise with each passing year. This developmental pattern is evident in *Figure 15* which shows that WCPSS performed better than any of the comparison NC LEAs at all grade levels in the 1999-2000 year.

Average EOG math developmental scale scores have been steadily climbing in WCPSS over time. Scores at all grades in 1999-2000 were the highest ever.

As shown in *Figure 16*, the pattern is clear: in the last three years, three-fourths or more of all students in grades 3-8 performed at or above grade level on the EOG math test. In 2000, students in all grades made improvement, and 85% or more of students in five of six grades performed at or above grade level. (This percentage reached 80% at grade 3.)

The percentage of students scoring at or above grade level continued to climb at grades 3 and 8. A WCPSS goal is that 95% of third- and eighth-graders score at or above grade level by 2003. Currently at these two grades, more students have scores at or above grade level in reading than in math. (The reverse is true for grades 4-7.)

2000-2001 EOG math scores are not available as of July 2001.

Figure 15
1999-2000 Average EOG Math Developmental Scale Scores: WCPSS and Comparable NC LEAs

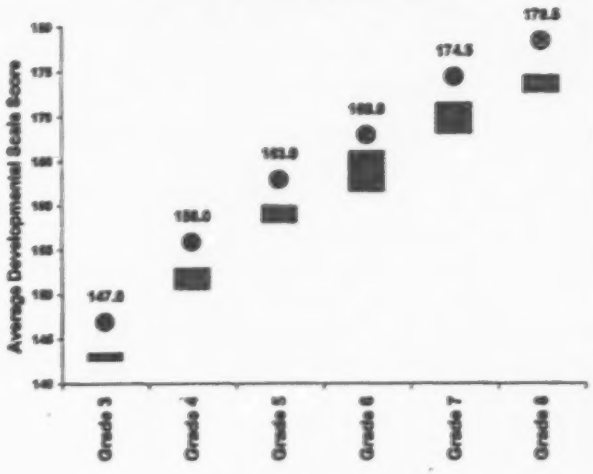
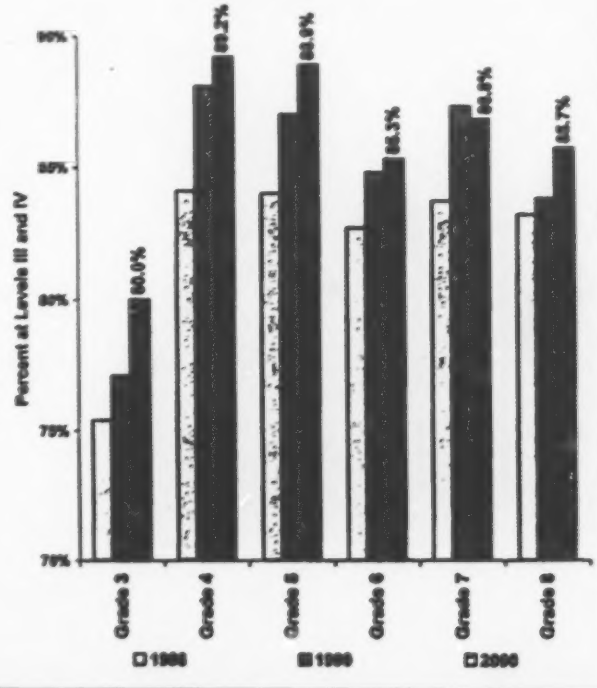


Figure 16
Percent of WCPSS Students at Levels III and IV: EOG Math 1998 through 2000



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NC PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
HIGH SCHOOL GRADES 9-12

END-OF-COURSE TESTS

WCPSS high school students performed better than students in comparable NC LEAs on EOC tests in the core subject areas of Algebra I, U.S. History, English I, Biology, and Economic, Legal & Political Systems.

In 1997-98, the NC Department of Public Instruction began to factor results on five end-of-course (EOC) tests into the state's ABC Accountability Model for high schools. Another five EOC tests were added to the accountability model in 1998-99. Results of the first five EOC tests are shown on this page. These five courses are taken by all students.

Figure 17
Algebra I EOC Examination:
WCPSS and Comparable NC LEAs

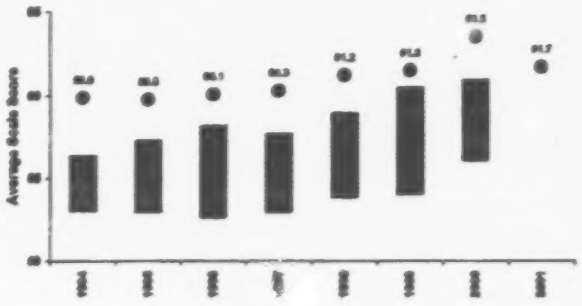


Figure 18
Biology EOC Examination:
WCPSS and Comparable NC LEAs

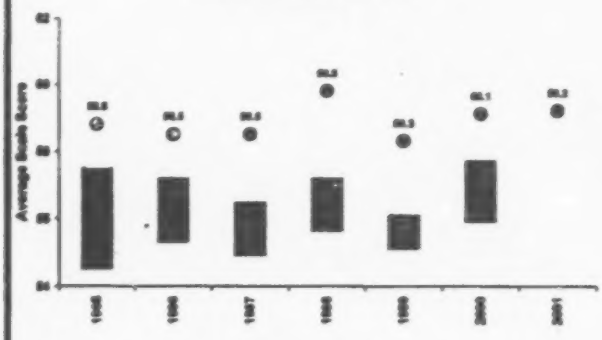


Figure 19
U.S. History EOC Examination:
WCPSS and Comparable NC LEAs

Figure 20
English I EOC Examination:
WCPSS and Comparable NC LEAs

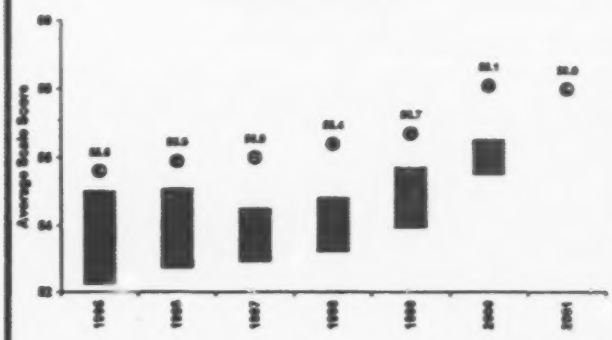
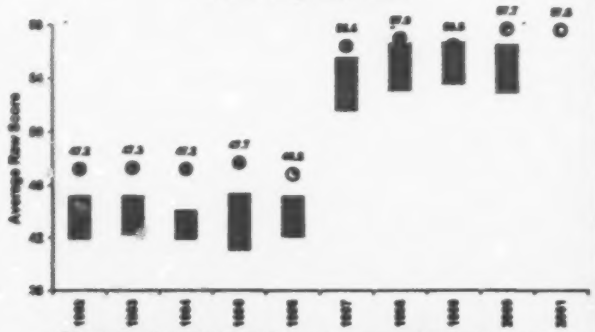


Figure 21
ELP EOC Examination:
WCPSS and Comparable NC LEAs



*Beginning in 1996-97, ELP scores are reported as developmental scale scores; before this they were reported as raw scores.

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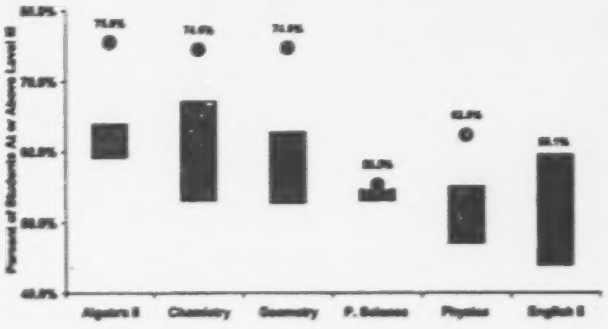
OTHER END-OF-COURSE TESTS AND 10th-GRADE WRITING TEST

WCPSS high school students performed better than students in comparable NC LEAs on the end-of-course tests in five elective courses (Algebra II, Physics, Chemistry, Geometry, Physical Science) and English II.

In 1999, the NC Department of Public Instruction began to factor results of five additional end-of-course (EOC) tests into the high school ABCs Accountability Model. The English II test, given since 1993, is a writing test that requires knowledge of world literature. EOC tests are scored for four achievement levels, as well as scale scores, with Levels III and IV indicating subject mastery. Higher percentages of WCPSS students performed at or above Level III than students in comparison NC LEAs.

Figure 22
End-of-Course Examinations in Elective Courses and English II:
WCPSS and Comparable NC LEAs, 2000



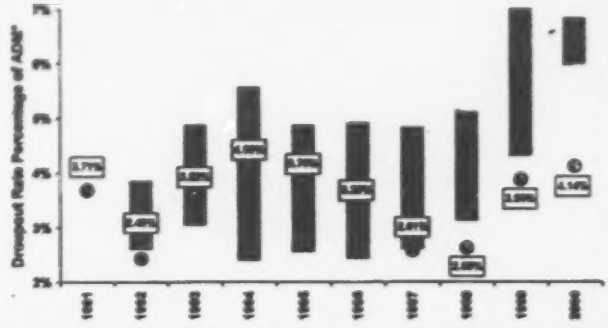
GRADES 7-12 DROPOUT RATE

The dropout rate in WCPSS for grades 7-12, once mid-range, remained the lowest among comparable NC LEAs.

For high schools, the dropout rate is another element included in the ABC Accountability Model. The WCPSS dropout rate fluctuated in the early 1990s but now remains the lowest among comparison NC LEAs.

*The 1999 and 2000 rates, calculated under new NC rules, define students who leave high school for community college GED or other programs as dropouts.

Figure 23
Grades 7-12 Annual Dropout Rate:
WCPSS and Comparable NC LEAs

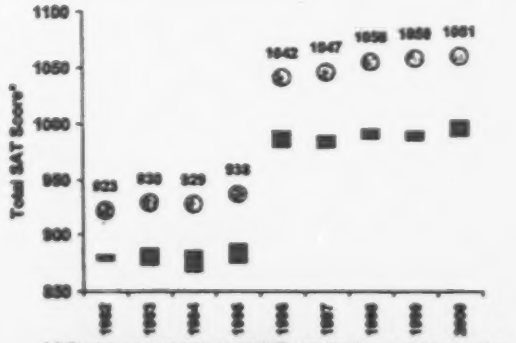


SAT RESULTS

SAT scores in WCPSS exceeded those in comparable NC LEAs every year since 1990.

For a decade, the percent of WCPSS students participating in the SAT exam has ranged from 73% to 78% (2000). Percent participation is an important variable: States and LEAs with high percent participation tend to have lower average scores than those with lower percent participation. While testing a high percentage of students, the WCPSS average score of 1061 for the total SAT in 2000 was above the national average of 1019. In North Carolina, only one relatively small LEA (Chapel Hill-Carrboro) tested as high a percentage of students and earned about the same SAT average (1060) as WCPSS in 2000.

Figure 1
Scholastic Aptitude Test:
WCPSS and Comparable NC LEAs



* SAT scores were recentered after April 1995 to realign the verbal and math sections, and put the average score for the total battery near 1000.

Summary for Section I: Comparisons with Other NC Districts (LEAs)

Overall, WCPSS is academically the strongest among the comparable LEAs in North Carolina, despite growing faster and spending less per pupil. WCPSS has also maintained a lower dropout rate than any of the comparison LEAs and a low ratio of administrator, supervisor, and consultant positions.

Areas where WCPSS exhibited relative academic strengths in 1999-2000:

- EOC performance in most core courses and five elective courses.
- EOG performance in reading and math.
- SAT performance.

Areas where WCPSS exhibited relative academic weaknesses in 1999-2000:

- Writing performance at grade 7.
- EOC English II (writing) performance in Grade 10.
- ELP EOC scores.

WCPSS students have achieved high test scores that have steadily improved during the 1990s and again in 2000. Even so, improvement must accelerate for WCPSS to achieve the goal of 95% of 3rd and 8th graders scoring at or above grade level by 2003. The gradual gains of recent years will not reach the 2003 goal. Currently, at these two grades, more students are nearer the goal in reading than in math. WCPSS continues to increase its efforts to support existing personnel with staff development training, recruit the best among new teachers, implement the best instructional programs, and rigorously evaluate existing programs.

SOURCES for SECTION I

This report contains the most accurate and current data for WCPSS and comparison NC LEAs available at the time of publication. Published sources of data were used, except in a few instances in the 1999-2000 year, as noted below.

Figures 2 and 3: Local, state, and federal per pupil expenditures are reported each year by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) for each LEA in a *Statistical Profile* publication. The 2000 per pupil expenditures are reported in another online publication, *1999-2000 Selected Financial Data* at www.ncpublicschools.org/fbs/stats/. In Figures 2 and 3, per pupil expenditures exclude child nutrition. Per pupil expenditure is computed only for current expense expenditures connected with the daily operation of schools (excluding community services, Head Start, adult education, and inter/intra fund transfers) by using final ADM figures in the denominator.

Figures 4-10: Values for the first-month ADM; number of teachers, administrators, supervisors and consultants; racial composition of student population; and number of students with disabilities are reported each year by the NCDPI for each LEA in the *Statistical Profile* publication. The opening of new WCPSS schools in the 1990s was measured by noting the year in which the school first appeared in the annual WCPSS directory listing of all schools. Free and reduced-price lunch data are reported by the NCDPI Office of Statistical Research. The WCPSS AG Department reported the 1999 AG data, and DPI reported the 2000 AG data in the online *Child Count* report in June, 2001.

Figures 11-22: EOC testing in grades 9-12 began in North Carolina with administration of the Algebra I EOC test in 1985-86. EOG testing in grades 3-8 began in 1992-93. EOC and EOG test results are reported each year by the NCDPI for each LEA in a *NC State Testing Results* publication. 1999-2000 test results are also reported in the NCDPI on-line *Report Card*. WCPSS reported the 2001 results.

Figures 1 and 23: Dropout rates and SAT results are reported each year by the NCDPI for each LEA in a *Report Card* publication. The dropout rate collected in North Carolina is an unduplicated count. The 1999-2000 dropout rates for WCPSS and other LEAs were obtained from the on-line *Report Card*. The 1998-99 SAT results are reported by the NCDPI in its 2000 *SAT Report* publication. In North Carolina, percent participation on the SAT is calculated by dividing the number of 12th-grade students who took the SAT by the seventh-month ADM for 12th-grade students.

SECTION II: COMPARISONS WITH COMPARABLE OUT-OF-STATE DISTRICTS

Data from the Educational Benchmarking Network

Background

For this section of the report, comparisons are presented of WCPSS and comparable school districts in other states. The **Educational Benchmarking Network (EBN)** is a collaborative of 18 public school districts in nine states, located primarily in the southeastern U.S. The network mission is to facilitate communication and to encourage improvement of the cooperating school districts by collecting and disseminating information related to key school measures and performance indicators, shared needs, and best practices.

Benchmarking, then, is a process for collecting data on key indicators from similar school districts. These indicators provide districts with a useful way to assess their own performance in selected areas and to compare their performance with that of similar (large, urban) districts. Thus, the network enhances a culture of continuous improvement for the participating benchmark districts.

Three North Carolina districts – Durham, Winston-Salem/Forsyth, and WCPSS – are members of the network. The other districts, that have participated and reported comparison data so far, include:

Anne Arundel (MD)
Cobb (GA)
Duval (FL)
Fairfax (VA)
Fulton (GA)
Greenville (SC)
Gwinnett (GA)
Nashville (TN)
Virginia Beach (VA)

Some districts with membership in EBN have not yet added their data to the EBN database, and no comparisons with those districts (in Florida, Kentucky, and Colorado) could be included in this report.

Section II of this report presents a selection of school system characteristics and performance indicators collected during the years 1996-97, when EBN was established, to 1999-2000, the most recently completed school year for which data are available.

EBN is at an early stage of development. There is no staff, and all contributions of data are voluntary and completed at a time convenient for the cooperating districts. Individual districts may collect and report varying amounts of data at their own pace. Also, data required in one state or district might not be required in another. A part of the benchmarking process is reaching agreement on indicators and developing a uniform structure for reporting data.

The figures in Section II reflect the most recent data available for the characteristics and indicators discussed. For clarification, a listing of the EBN districts compared in each figure is presented at the end of this section. Because comparisons with the Winston-Salem/Forsyth and Durham districts were included in Section I of this report, they are omitted from comparisons in this section.

Information about EBN can be found at their website, www.ebndistricts.org. The EBN contact for WCPSS is Doris Tyler at dtyler@wcpss.net.

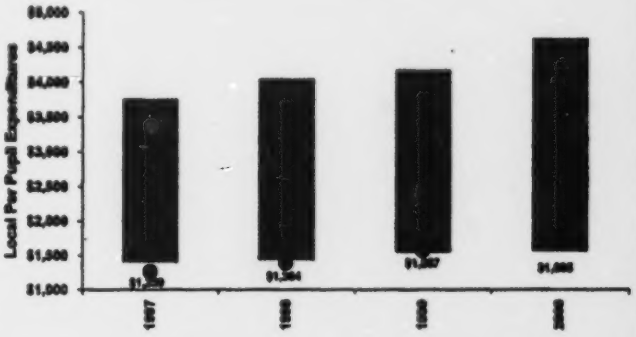
LOCAL PER PUPIL EXPENDITURES

Local per pupil expenditures in WCPSS were below those of all other EBN districts in the southeast for two years and next to lowest for 1999 and 2000.

Education funding formulas vary significantly by state. Nevertheless, local per pupil expenditures were well below those of comparison out-of-state EBN districts in both 1997 and 1998. Although the WCPSS per student expenditure has increased each year since, it remained next to lowest among the comparison EBN districts in the 1999 and 2000 school years.

Note: A listing of the EBN districts compared in each figure is presented at the end of Section II.

Figure 24
Local Per Pupil Expenditures Excluding Child Nutrition:
WCPSS and Comparison EBN Districts

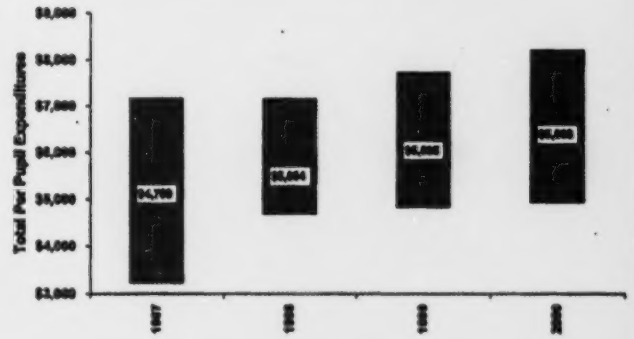


TOTAL PER PUPIL EXPENDITURES

The total of federal, state, and local per pupil expenditures in WCPSS remained second lowest among comparison EBN districts in 1997 and 1998, and third lowest in 1999 and 2000.

When all sources of revenue are combined, the total of federal, state, and local per student expenditures was also below that of most comparison EBN districts. Even with recent increases, WCPSS total expenditures remained below all but two EBN districts in the two most recent years.

Figure 25
Total Federal, State and Local Per Pupil Expenditures
Excluding Child Nutrition: WCPSS and Comparison EBN Districts

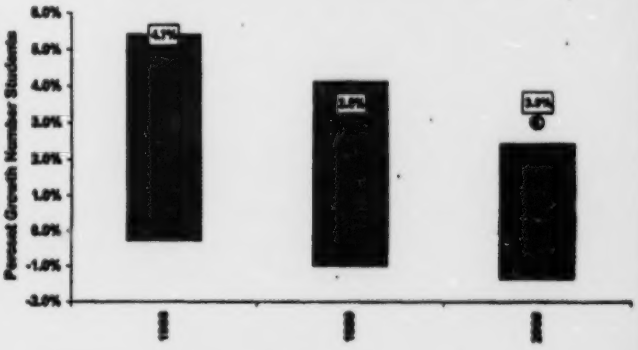


POPULATION GROWTH

In 2000, the student population growth in WCPSS exceeded that of comparison EBN districts. In contrast, three other EBN districts reported decreases in student population.

For the three years in which EBN enrollment figures are available, WCPSS growth ranked near the top for two years and, in 2000, was higher than the comparison EBN districts in percent growth in number of students.

Figure 26
Percent Growth in Number of Students at the Beginning
of the School Year: WCPSS and Comparison EBN Districts



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RACIAL COMPOSITION

Racial composition of student populations in EBN districts varied in 2000, with the WCPSS student population about mid-range for most racial categories.

Racial composition of student populations in EBN districts continued to vary. In 2000, the enrollment for Caucasian students ranged from 45-76% (WCPSS 64%), African-American students from 11-42% (WCPSS 26%), Asian-American students from 1-15% (WCPSS 4%), Hispanic students from 2-12% (WCPSS 4%), and other students from 0.2-3% (WCPSS 2%).

Figure 27
Percent Enrollment of Students by Race in 2000:
WCPSS and Eight Other EBN Districts

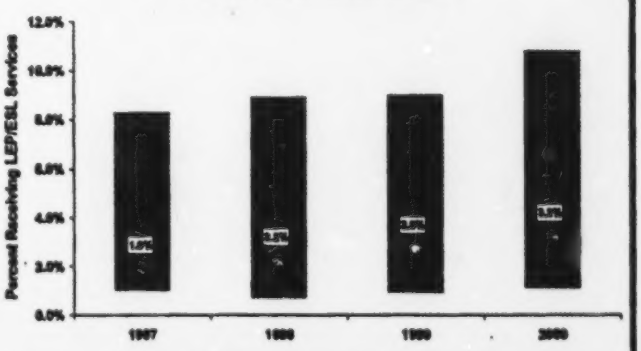
	White	Black	Asian-Am.	Hispanic	Other
Duval (FL)	60%	42%	3%	3%	2%
Cobb (GA)	67%	22%	3%	6%	2%
Fulton (GA)	45%	41%	6%	6%	3%
Anne Arundel (MD)	76%	19%	3%	2%	0.2%
Greenville (SC)	67%	27%	1%	3%	2%
Virginia Beach (VA)	64%	27%	5%	4%	0.2%
Fairfax (VA)	60%	11%	15%	12%	3%
Gwinnet (GA)	67%	18%	8%	6%	2%
WCPSS	64%	26%	4%	4%	2%

LEP/ESL SERVICES

The percentage of WCPSS students receiving LEP/ESL (Limited English Proficiency/English as a Second Language) services was at the lower range of values among comparison EBN districts from 1997 to 2000.

Between 1997 and 2000, WCPSS showed a yearly increase in the percentage of students receiving LEP/ESL services. WCPSS remained in the lower range of percentage of students receiving services among reporting EBN districts for the same time period.

Figure 28
Percent Students Receiving LEP/ESL Services:
WCPSS and Comparison EBN Districts

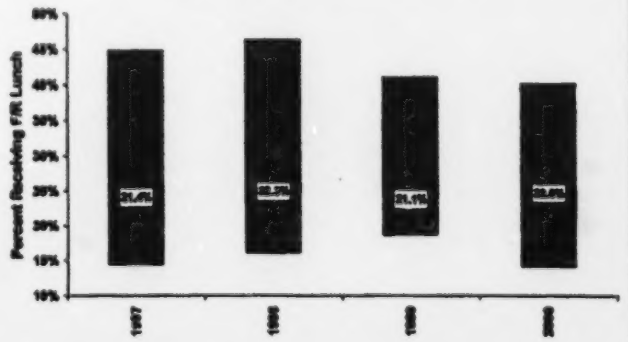


FREE AND REDUCED-PRICE LUNCHES

The percentage of WCPSS students receiving free and reduced-price lunches was at low- to mid-range of values among comparison EBN districts from 1997 to 2000.

Between 1997 and 2000, WCPSS experienced little change in percentage of students receiving free and reduced-price lunches. Similarly, comparison EBN districts experienced few increases, and some experienced decreases.

Figure 29
Percent of All Students Receiving Free and Reduced-Price Lunches:
WCPSS and Comparison EBN Districts



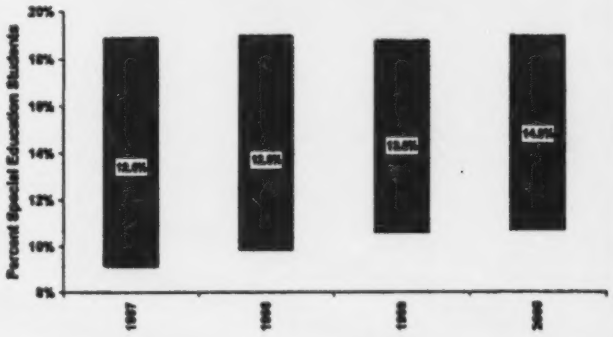
STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The percentage of WCPSS students with disabilities* was next to lowest among comparison EBN districts in 1997 and 1998, and at the mid-range of values in 1999 and 2000.

In WCPSS, the percentage of students with disabilities increased from 12.6% in 1997 to 14% in 2000. These percentages were at the low range of values among EBN districts initially but moved to mid-range in 1999.

*Unduplicated count of children ages 3-21 as of December 1 each school year. Students with disabilities have Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and are eligible for federal funds (Title VI-B).

Figure 30
Percent of Students Classified as Special Education as of December: WCPSS and Comparison EBN Districts



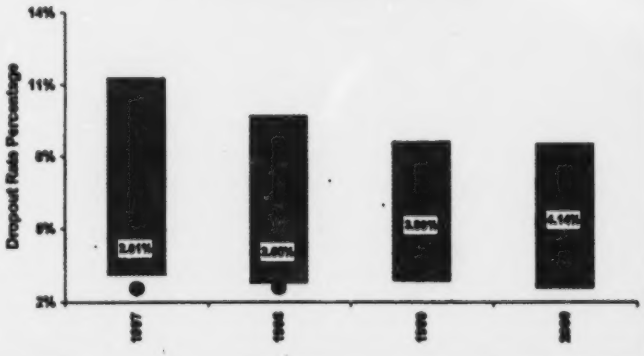
GRADES 7-12 DROPOUT RATE

The dropout rate in WCPSS for grades 7-12 was the lowest among other EBN districts in 1997 and 1998, but was below only half of the EBN disticts by 2000*.

The dropout rate in WCPSS has remained the lowest among comparable districts in NC, and it was the lowest among other EBN districts in 1997 and 1998. By 2000, the WCPSS dropout rate was below half of the other EBN districts.

*The 1999 and 2000 NC rates, calculated under new rules, define students who leave high school for community college GED or other programs as dropouts.

Figure 31
Grades 7-12 Annual Dropout Rate: WCPSS and Comparison EBN Districts

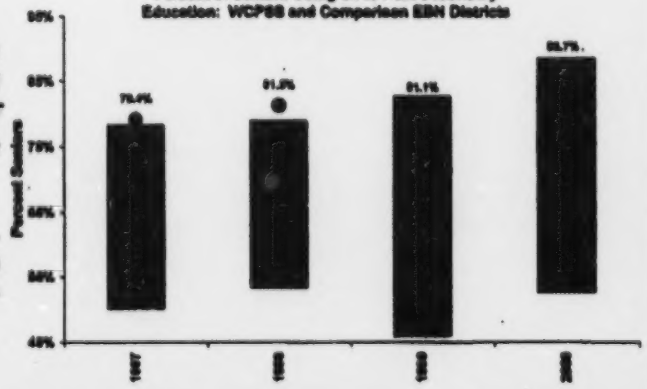


SENIORS GOING ON TO POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

The percentage of WCPSS seniors going on to post-secondary education was highest among comparison EBN district in three of four years and next to highest in the remaining year.

The percentage of WCPSS seniors going on to post-secondary education was above that of comparable EBN districts in 1997 and 1998—and above all districts except one (Fairfax, VA) in 1999 and 2000.

Figure 32
Percent of Seniors Going on to Post-Secondary Education: WCPSS and Comparison EBN Districts



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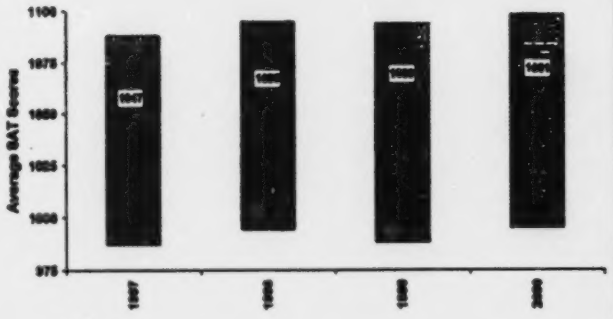
SAT RESULTS

SAT scores in WCPSS exceeded those in all but one of the comparable EBN districts from 1997 to 2000.

For a decade, the percent of WCPSS students participating in the SAT exam has ranged from 73% to almost 80%. Percent participation is an important variable: Districts with higher percent participation tend to have lower average scores than those with lower percent participation. While testing a high percentage of students, the WCPSS average score of 1061 for the total SAT in 2000 was above the national average of 1019. Among EBN districts, only one district (Fairfax, VA) tested as high a percentage of students and earned a higher SAT average than WCPSS, 1997-2000.

Figure 33
Average Scholastic Aptitude Test Scores:
WCPSS and Comparison EBN Districts

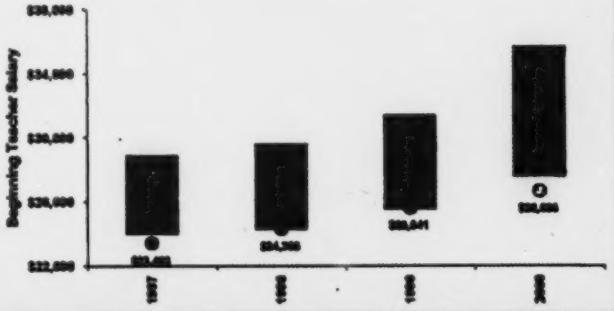


BEGINNING CLASSROOM TEACHER SALARY (B.A. DEGREE)

The beginning classroom teacher salary (B.A. degree) in WCPSS has fluctuated from lowest to next to lowest among EBN districts.

The WCPSS beginning classroom teacher salary (Bachelor's degree) was below that of all the comparison EBN districts in 1997 and again in 2000. For the other two years, 1998 and 1999, the beginning classroom teacher salary (B.A. degree) in WCPSS was second lowest among EBN districts.

Figure 34
Beginning Classroom Teacher Salary
(Bachelor's Degree): WCPSS and
Comparison EBN Districts



Summary for Section II: Comparisons with Educational Benchmarking Network (EBN) Districts

Areas where WCPSS exhibited relative strengths in 2000:

- Percent of seniors going on to post-secondary education.
- SAT performance and participation rate.

Areas where WCPSS exhibited relative weaknesses in 2000:

- Per pupil expenditures.
- Percent of dropouts in grades 7-12 (mid-range).
- Beginning classroom teacher salary (BA Degree).

For percent of (1) students receiving LEP/ESL services, (2) free and reduced-price lunches, and (3) special education services, WCPSS was at low- to mid-range of values among comparison EBN districts from 1997 to 2000. Overall, WCPSS is in the upper range of seniors going on to post-secondary education and in SAT results and participation rate among the comparison EBN districts, despite growing faster and spending less per pupil.

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SOURCES for SECTION II:

Section II of this report contains the most accurate and current data for WCPSS and the comparison EBN districts available at the time of publication. Sources for the WCPSS data, with a few exceptions, were reported in the previous section. For additional information about the Educational Benchmarking Network and the participating districts, the on-line address is http://www/ebndistricts.org/ The source of data for most of this section was the on-line EBN database for members only. The few exceptions are noted below.

Figure 24: Local Per Pupil Expenditures. Comparison districts are Duval (FL), Cobb (GA), Fulton (GA), Gwinnett (GA), Anne Arundel (MD), Nashville (TN) and Virginia Beach (VA). Per pupil expenditure is computed only for current expense expenditures connected with the daily operation of schools (excluding community services, Head Start, adult education, and inter/intra fund transfers). "Local" expenditures are regarded as all expenditures not funded by state or federal governments.

Figure 25: Total Per Pupil Expenditures. Comparison districts are Duval (FL) Cobb (GA), Fulton (GA), Gwinnett (GA), Anne Arundel (MD), Nashville (TN), Fairfax (VA), and Virginia Beach (VA). "State" and "Federal" expenditures are the amounts spent for education from the budgets of state and federal governments, respectively.

Figure 26: Population Growth. Comparison districts are Duval (FL), Cobb (GA), Fulton (GA) Gwinnett (GA), Anne Arundel (MD), Greenville (SC), Nashville (TN), Fairfax (VA), and Virginia Beach (VA).

Figures 27: Racial Composition of Student Population. Comparison districts are Duval (FL), Cobb (GA), Fulton (GA), Anne Arundel (MD), Greenville (SC), Virginia Beach (VA), Fairfax (VA), and Gwinnet (GA).

Figure 28: LEP/ESL (English as a Second Language) Services. Comparison districts are Duval (FL), Fulton (GA), Gwinnett (GA), Anne Arundel (MD), Nashville (TN), Fairfax (VA), and Virginia Beach (VA). WCPSS data are from the ESL Program Administrator and Data Manager (919-850-8966).

Figure 29: Free and Reduced-Price Lunches. Comparison districts are Duval (FL), Cobb (GA), Gwinnett (GA), Anne Arundel (MD), Greenville (SC), Nashville (TN), Fairfax (VA), and Virginia Beach (VA). The 2000 data include breakfasts for pre-kindergarten students.

Figure 30: Students with Disabilities. Comparison districts are Duval (FL), Cobb (GA), Fulton (GA), Gwinnett (GA), Anne Arundel (MD), Greenville (SC), Nashville (TN), Fairfax, (VA), and Virginia Beach (VA). All federal codes, except that for academically gifted students, were included.

Figure 31: Annual Dropout Rates. Comparison districts are Duval (FL), Cobb (GA), Fulton (GA), Gwinnett (GA), Anne Arundel (MD), Nashville (TN), Fairfax (VA), and Virginia Beach. Calculations were based on grade 7-12 beginning-of-year enrollment.

Figure 32: Seniors Going On to Post-Secondary Education. Comparison districts are Duval (FL), Gwinnett (GA), Anne Arundel (MD), Nashville (TN), Fairfax (VA), and Virginia Beach (VA). Some districts do not collect this data. WCPSS annually surveys seniors for their intentions. Data collection methods vary among districts.

Figure 33: Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT). Comparison districts are Duval (FL), Cobb (GA), Fulton (GA), Gwinnett (GA), Anne Arundel (MD), Fairfax (VA), and Virginia Beach (VA). Nashville (TN) scores for 1997 and 1998 were not included because the participation rates were only 17% and 21% respectively, and no scores were reported for 1999 and 2000. (Most TN students take the ACT instead.) Other districts reported 55-83% SAT participation rates. In North Carolina, percent participation on the SAT is calculated by dividing the number of 12th-grade students who took the SAT by the seventh-month ADM for 12th-grade students.

Figure 34: Beginning Teacher Salary (B.A. Degree). Comparison districts are Duval (FL), Cobb (GA), Fulton (GA), Gwinnett (GA), Anne Arundel (MD), Nashville (TN), Fairfax (VA), and Virginia Beach (VA). The amount of any local supplements is not in the EBN database.

State of the System

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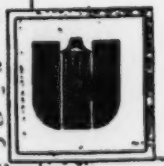

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